TRANSCRIPT—CATHERINE WRIGHT

Interviewee: Catherine Wright

Interviewer: Tealey Ellis and Judith Robertson

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Abstract: Catherine Wright discusses her memories of growing up in the Fairview Community, and how the community has changed in her lifetime.

Tealey Ellis: My name is Tealey Ellis. I am a volunteer with Fairview Library Oral History Project. Today, March 14th, 2019 I am interviewing Catherine Wright at the Fairview Library. And thank you so much, Mrs. Wright, for agreeing to this interview.

Judith Robertson: This is Judith Robertson recording the oral history of Catherine Wright at the Fairview Library at 2:30 on March the 14th, 2019 for the Fairview Oral History Project for the North Carolina room at Pack Library in the Buncombe County Library System. The conditions of use form for sound and video recordings has been signed by the interviewee.

TE: Okay. And thank you again, Ms. Wright, for this interview and some of the first questions I'm going to ask you, you had shared some of that information before we were

recording. So that's why some of it will be repeated. And Judith at times will come in with questions too. So, each of us will end up asking questions if that's all right with you. So, if we could start with telling us where and when you were born.

Catherine Wright: Well, I was born in Asheville. I don't know the name of that hospital, but from my baby book I know that. 1924, December the 30th.

TE: Okay. And your parents' names? And if you know where they were born?

CW: Well, my mother was Bertie Virginia Cauble. I'm sure she was born at home.

TE: Would that have been in Asheville or Fairview?

CW: Fairview.

TE: Okay.

CW: And my dad was George Herman Williams. I'm sure he was born at home too at that time. I have no idea. And I would say in West Asheville because that's where the family grew up.

TE: Okay. And what about your grandparents? If you can recall some of those names and where they might have been born? Just so we have the connection.

CW: Well now my great-grandfather, Cauble, came from Holland. It's in the records there. And they settled in Rowan County, South Carolina.

TE: Okay.

CW: And then they moved here, when they moved to Fairview I don't know, but the biggest majority of most of the family lived in Fairview. Okay. He lived, Grandpa, was Jacob L. Cauble, lived down on what was then Gap Creek. It's now Webb Creek. Roads changed names. And grandmother was a Pinkerton, Fanny Pinkerton. She was his second wife. He had a Mary Lanning, the first wife, but she died fairly, they weren't married very long. So, they had two children and they were all from right there in that area down on the Gap Creek.

TE: Okay. And that was your great.

CW: That was my grandfather and my great-grandfather.

TE: Grandfather. Okay. And that was on your mother's side. And your father's side?

CW: My father's side, they lived in that in a house that's still standing there out by on 74. And they were all, I guess, born in that house. That's the only place I know about them.

TE: Okay.

CW: My dad's people, the Williamses, are sort of like nomads. Or at least my grandmother, Mary Williams and grandpa, they moved a lot like my daddy did, our family, my family. I lived in about 13 different houses before I was graduated.

TE: Well, that is a few. That is a few.

JR: Was it all in this area? West Asheville?

CW: West Asheville and this area. Yeah.

TE: Okay. Well, hope you were able to make friends each of those moves that you made.

CW: Well, I started school in West Asheville at Vance Elementary. I remember Daddy taking me to school, I remember the teacher's name was Mrs. Thumbolt, she was a big lady. And that's all I remember. I don't even think I went very much because our parents, like I said, they moved around. The next school then was Oakley. We lived in Oakley and I started there in the second grade. I didn't have any records from the first grade. Now I remember that they wanted my records, I had none. So, I don't know how I got enrolled, but they put me in second grade. And we lived there in Oakley until we moved to Fairview when I was 12, I was in the fifth grade. Then we stayed in Fairview the rest of that.

TE: Okay. Well, that's good to know. What kind of work did your father do?

CW: Well, actually, growing up, he just did everything. He had no steady regular job. Then later, of course, he worked with ( ) and retired from that construction company. But all those growing up years, it was just here and there.

TE: Working say for farmers?

CW: I know one thing I do remember, he had a stall in the city market in Asheville back when the Great Depression hit. Because I heard him telling... I remember going with mother over there to his vegetable stall. And I remember when the depression hit and the banks all went busted, that one of the officials there in Asheville committed suicide in an office right above him.

TE: Oh wow.

CW: Now I wasn't, but what? I was born in 1924, so I couldn't have been very old.

TE: No.

CW: But I remember that. It was something unusual. My grandfather Williams and grandma, they lost their home because they couldn't pay the loans.

TE: At the stall that your father ran, were the vegetables and things that he sold what he raised?

CW: No. I don't know where he got them. And that old city market is where the Asheville Police Department, in that area is now. Now my Grandpa Williams, he helped build the electric lines that went through to Hominy Valley out to Enka and all in that and they'd go and camp out. Because he gave me a little coffee pot that held exactly one cup of coffee and he said that he'd put it on the fire, the bonfire type, to make his coffee every day. He gave me that when I was in high school. I have it sitting on a shelf at home now.

TE: Oh wow.

JR: I'd like to step back just a little, talking about your parents. You told us something very interesting about your parents, about when they got married. Could you tell us a little bit about?

CW: My parents?

JR: Yeah. When they got married.

CW: Well, at that time, Daddy was driving a tour bus to New York and back from Asheville to New York. Because I remember hearing them talk about Lake Erie and those places. And he'd take mother with him some. Daddy was older than mother. He was about eight years older and I'm sure he domineered her, a 14-year-old. But anyway, that's

when they started out, and mother was 17 when I was born. And we lived in West Asheville at that time.

TE: How long would he be gone on those tour trips?

CW: I don't know. I wasn't born then and I don't remember. I just remember hearing them talk about it.

TE: Didn't know if you'd heard it in stories or not.

CW: I know I couldn't have been but about maybe three or four, about four maybe when mother'd go into Asheville. From West Asheville, we'd ride the trolley car. They had the rails down the track then and I thought that was always a good adventure to ride the trolley car.

TE: It is today too, when you can find it. Do you remember the first place that you lived when your family moved to Fairview?

CW: Oh yeah. Let's see. Wait a minute now. When we first moved to Fairview. We lived off of '74.

TE: Okay. At that house that you were talking about?

CW: No, it's not there now. They've torn it down. It was up off of 74. There's a church over there now. Calvary something, I think. But anyway, and I know we moved there. The people across the highway from us had a pigeon farm. They raised pigeons up in there. It's where Eastwood is now. It's opposite Eastwood off of 74.

TE: Okay. Do you know why your parents chose to move to Fairview?

CW: I have no idea. I guess we rented everywhere and maybe we'd run out places to rent. Anyway, we moved out there. And we had a spring at the bottom of the hill, why they built a house, always on the hill, the spring and the bottom. We'd carry water up to wash. Mother would scrub it on the scrub board and hang it out on the line of course. And we always had to carry water the day before wash day so that we'd have big tubs.

JR: Life was a lot of work back then.

CW: Yeah, it was. But we didn't have pastimes like kids do now. We had no gadgets, we had no phones, no TVs, nothing. We had playhouses we built out in the woods, lined them with stones and took every little lid or piece of glass or something and made things with them. I had a little brother that, I guess he was four or five, and I had to watch him because he'd always tear up my play house. But that's what we did for pastimes.

JR: You used your imagination, didn't you?

CW: Oh yeah. We climbed trees, we had big trees. I sat up in big oak trees and was a princess and everything. I could imagine. Had a great imagination.

JR: Exactly.

CW: But even as populated as Fairview is now, you can't believe like 75, 80 years ago, we didn't have telephones, we didn't have inside bathrooms, we had a john. Even when I got married in '44, people had outside johns. And electric lines had not been run down Gap Creek where my grandparents lived at that time.

JR: And some of the other people we've interviewed have said that Fairview didn't have as many trees then as it does now. That you could drive down Cane Creek and it would be open fields. Is that what you remember?

CW: Oh, well they pastured those things. Everybody farmed. I mean, there's big farm lands. So that Cane Creek was, with the Tweeds and the Ashers, and those people that owned huge amounts of land. Our grandparents owned lots of land, they were land poor because when they sold land for $2 or 20 something dollars an acre. And so when all the utilities and things came through, then things began to change.

TE: So how long have you lived in Fairview now?

CW: Well, since I was about 12 year old.

TE: Okay. That's been a few years.

CW: Of course, I spent lots of times at my grandparents before that down on Gap Creek. I remember walking Gap Creek when it was a dirt road. Just walked right by where we live now. Barefooted with a cousin of mine. My grandmother would go visit her sister and he and I would get out and walk, kick rocks, or play, whatever. I never dreamed I was going to have a house there on that land someday.

TE: Didn't know what was waiting for you, did you? You mentioned earlier some of the things that your father did and you talked about your mom and the water and getting ready for wash day and things of that nature. Did you all have a garden and raise any crops?

CW: Oh yeah.

TE: What kind of crops?

CW: Well, we raised what we ate. We didn't have big crops. When we lived in Oakley, now this is not Fairview though, but we had a little garden. And that was back when part of the depression people had no work so daddy raised vegetables and I'd have to go up into Broadview Park area and see if those people if they wanted to buy them. Because most of those people who lived up there were World War I veterans and they had contacted TB so they stayed there close to the VA. And they drew a pension from the government so they were rich.

TE: Did you actually carry the vegetables?

CW: I had a red wagon I pulled. I'd take orders and then my sister and I take the wagon and go and deliver them.

TE: Well, you learned some math then too, didn't you?

CW: I guess I learned. You'd think that'd be humiliating, but at the time it didn't seem to bother me.

JR: Oh, it was probably exciting.

TE: Oh, I would think, yeah.

CW: I went to school with the people that I went to their door and said, "Would you like to buy some tomatoes?" But nobody put anybody down in those days. Everybody was the same.

TE: Everybody was in the same situation.

CW: Except one time I went to deliver something and a lady said, "Don't come to my front door. Go to the back." I remember that one instance. Yeah.

TE: That was rude. I'm sorry, that was rude.

CW: But at Fairview, we moved out here, I went into the fifth grade there. We lived in one, two, four, five houses in Fairview.

TE: Well, tell us about Fairview School, elementary.

CW: When I went to school, I don't know how many went there. It was not the building that's there now. It was the old school. But we rode the bus to school, nobody drove their kids to school then, and we ate in the lunchroom, that log building. If you had the money to. Sometimes we'd take peanut butter sandwich or something. And the teachers, I don't know how to put it. It seemed like we learned more than the children are learning now. However, we didn't have as wide a variety of things to learn.

JR: Sure.

TE: Well said.

CW: And even after I'd married and had children in school, I had a teacher still at that school that taught me. And she stopped me one time over there and said, "Are you still using good penmanship that I taught you?

JR: Checking up on you.

CW: And now they don't even care if they write.

TE: So overall, would you describe your years at Fairview Elementary School as good? As positive?

CW: Oh yeah. I love school.

TE: What did you like about it? What was the thing you liked most?

CW: Well, I don't know that I had any one thing I liked most. I just loved learning. I was blessed with a good memory, so therefore I didn't have to study as hard as some children did. And I loved art and reading. I always loved to read. I just liked all of school, just being with people. Then when we got in high school, we were in plays and this type of stuff. I loved that.

TE: And so, the high school you went to then was in Fairview.

CW: One end of the building was elementary, the other was high school.

TE: Okay. And you said there were plays and things. So, what were some of the activities and things that you were involved in?

CW: Well, I was a member of the Beta Club. Of course we had a ball team. I played basketball.

TE: Oh right. What position?

CW: I wasn't really good, but I got to go to games and play. And I was always smaller and there's always some big robust girls. But then you always had a recitation contest or something every year. And we would put on these things on stage and all the parents would come. It was a big thing. And the difference now, and this is something I really

remember, we made sure we had nothing on Wednesday night because we were planning something one time and the teacher said, "We'll do it Wednesday night," somebody spoke up and said, "No, there won't be anybody here. Because that's church night."

TE: Church. Yes.

CW: Now it's the opposite. There's nobody at church because they're over, if you want to play ball, you play on Wednesday. But really that's the truth. We did not have anything on Wednesday night. And we had prayer ever morning. It was just a common thing that we did then.

TE: I'm curious if your teachers, probably in higher elementary and maybe early high school, did you do very much with poetry? Did you have to memorize some poems?

CW: We did. We memorized poems and we had to write them. I don't know if we just had a teacher that loved literature, but in the literature class we had to write a lot of essays and plays and things of that--.

TE: Did you enjoy it?

CW: Oh, I enjoyed that.

TE: Yeah. Was that kind of your favorite area in school?

CW: I liked that.

TE: Arts?

CW: I liked all of it.

TE: Well, you were a good student to have, that's for sure.

CW: Well, yeah.

TE: What, and this would be talking about your teenage years, early teens, what do you think, in looking back, were some of the best things about living in Fairview?

CW: Well, I guess maybe it was small and we didn't have great big gatherings. In the summertime you'd always have evangelists that come to one of the churches and for two weeks they'd have a service every night. So that's a big thing for us kids or teenagers, we'd all walk. Nobody had cars, we had to walk. And then we lived on 74 just as you come out of Emma's Grove Road, there's four houses in a row. And we lived in one of those. And we skated in the highway. There wasn't enough cars to bother us. So in the afternoons, we'd all, from way up the road about maybe eight or 10, 12 teenagers skating.

TE: You get there a little faster.

CW: Well, we just skated up and down.

JR: Just for fun.

CW: It was just a route for recreation.

TE: Oh okay.

CW: And whoever was on that end would see a car, they'd holler, "Car." Everybody'd pull off, that car passed. There wasn't any cars.

TE: There wasn't any cars then.

CW: We'd go down to the Hot Shot there in Biltmore, we'd double up in a little old one seated coop this boy had, we'd all pitch in our change to buy gas. It wasn't but about 10 cents a gallon or something. And now you can't hardly believe this, but we could go as a couple. Jack and I could eat a hot dog, potato chips, and a drink for a quarter. Two of us.

TE: Two of you.

JR: Oh, my goodness.

CW: Hot dogs were five cents apiece and the drinks were five cents. And the potato chips was five cents for a bag we divided.

JR: And this was when your husband was in high school also?

CW: He was in high school when I was in high school. He went into service.

JR: So, you all were dating then kind of.

CW: Yeah.

JR: Yeah.

TE: Wow. 25 cents.

JR: I realized the Hotshot was there that long.

CW: Well, that was the place everybody went.

JR: It was. It was The place, wasn't it?

CW: But you just can't think that you could do that. But the point is, we didn't always have that quarter.

JR: There you go.

TE: And now it doesn't sound like much, but when you're actually-

CW: That was our recreation.

TE: Yeah. When you were living it, that was a lot of money.

CW: Yeah, it was.

TE: But it was a nice treat when you could.

CW: And we didn't have telephones. Well, we did finally get telephones, I think, but I think I was out of school by then. But it was party lines. You had eight people on one and each one had a different ring. I think ours was two shorts and two long. Now everybody else's rung all day long, you didn't pay a bit of attention, but when that two short, two long, that's ours. And you probably had about five or six other parties listening to it.

TE: No secrets. You didn't have any secrets, could you?

CW: Not much.

TE: Oh, that is funny. As a late teenager and a young adult woman, do you think there was a sense of community in Fairview?

CW: I think it was.

TE: How would you describe that feeling of community?

CW: Well, I went with my husband stayed with him and we married after he had been in service about a year. And then he had two years ….. A year I stayed with him, a year he

was overseas, 18 months. But we had clubs like the Good Neighbor Club and all the young married ladies and some of them, we'd meet there once a month. And the home demonstration of people from Buncombe County, they'd come out and give demonstrations on how to can and how to do things. That sounds real primitive now, but we did that. And through our churches, I think we stayed connected that way.

TE: Those kind of activities fit the time you lived in that.

CW: Yeah, we didn't have a lot of social life. But nobody got bored because by the time you got through carrying water--.

TE: You were too tired to do anything else.

CW: Yeah.

TE: How would you describe Fairview today?

CW: Oh, gracious, Fairview's a very progressive community. We have lots of new people and it's pretty active. There's something going in Fairview all the time. And it's building up. We've built up with good people. There are people we don't know and some of the names we can't pronounce. Now where I live, we've been there about 45, 47 years. My husband built our house and there was nobody around me when we built there and now I've got a house across the road, I've got a house across the road.

But back before then, we knew neighbors. We don't know our neighbors now. People move in, we don't socialize as much, I don't think, neighbor to neighbor. Of course, if somebody needed something, I'm sure everybody's ready to pitch in and help. But we've lost that neighborly, the thing that we used to have when there wasn't too many people.

Somebody moved in, you always went over and took them some fresh food or something. Now you just, I don't know who lives over there. I really don't know the people that live across the road from me and I look in their drive every day. I see them going and coming.

TE: Yeah. At what point in time, in your memory, did the ethnic background of Fairview start to change? Any people of different color, races?

CW: Well now we had colored people that lived on Gap Creek when my grandma, when I was growing up we had a family, but we loved them. We treated them just like us. In fact, one of the family that lived there, she delivered my sister.

TE: Oh, did she?

CW: My mother went home to grandmother’s to have my sister and this lady delivered. And my parents, my dad's family was really dark-skinned people. And so this lady always said that she made Dorothy dark when she delivered. But we love those people. They were great. There was no distinction.

TE: What about today?

CW: Well, I don't think there's a whole lot of distinction, not in Fairview. We have different races that worship with us in church and they're just the same as we are. My dad was very, want to call racist, whatever. He did not want anything to do with the colored people. But yet, one time he was coming from work and this Black man and lady and a little kid was over on the mountain, cold weather and he picked them up and brought them to the house and told mother to fix them something to eat. Well then, I don't know what she would've fixed them, maybe some cornbread, potatoes or whatever we had. And

he took them over to the Fairview School. At that time, they had outside stairs on the old one and a landing up at the top. And he told them, "Now you can stay up here tonight, but be gone before the officials." And so, he wasn't as hard hearted as you think when it come to helping somebody.

TE: Well, that was certainly an act of kindness that you just described. For all the years that you've lived in Fairview, do you recall any individuals who were considered real characters? Maybe they were storytellers or just different behaviors that made them stand out from maybe the general public?

CW: Well, of course, I always think back to one of the pastors we had, Pastor Sinclair, Wade Sinclair. He and his wife are special to me. Now there was a Ms. Dotson down on Cane Creek, she had a large family, but she knew how to can, how to do everything and I looked up to her for a lot of things. I don't know. And I'm sure there is some that are right off the top of my head ...

TE: That's okay.

CW: I don't know of anybody.

TE: That's okay. Who do you think were people in Fairview that might have been considered leaders in Fairview?

CW: You mean way back?

TE: Mm-hmm.

CW: Not necessarily in my time, I mean.

TE: Any that you recall.

CW: Now politics are different today than what there were then.

TE: Oh sure.

CW: We had a sheriff, in Asheville —a Buncombe County Sheriff. Then we had precincts. Oakley was a precinct, Fairview was a precinct, Bat Cave was a precinct. We had precincts. You had a precinct chairman. He was voted on and then he elected the school board. They chose the school teachers. So, everybody wanted to be careful, you want to please that precinct chairman because if you don't, you may not get a job. In fact, one of our teachers, my seventh-grade teacher, the best teacher in the whole world, had a brother that was principal at another school. And their ball team played, they may have played Fairview, but she hollered for his team. Did you know she lost her job? They moved her to another school. It was that bad.

TE: Oh wow.

CW: It was that bad.

TE: My goodness.

CW: And see they would vote and you'd go to a common area, a gym or something, everybody for him--. And so everybody knew who everybody--. Now the McClure Clarkes were really a big factor in our community.

JR: Absolutely.

CW: And the whole family was that with the federation that much?

TE: Yes.

CW: They were great. And they're still great. They're down to earth people and they have helped shape Fairview. And the Lynches, Dr. Lynch. I thought some of that would come to me after awhile. But anyway, I'm kind of a rebel when it comes to that because I feel like nobody should tell somebody else what to do.

TE: Right.

CW: So, when CP Clare came to Fairview, they had to ask somebody about the people. So, they went to these men that was supposed to be in charge. So, some people didn't go to work when they first opened the plant. In fact, I was one that didn't. And I kept inquiring. Well, I had good test scores, I knew that. We had to go to the employment office and be tested. And then the principal at our school was over at the house one day, we had some PTA business. And he said, "Why are you not working at Clare?" Because we were training right in the back of the school and I could drive my boys to school and go right to work. I said, "Well, evidently they don't want me." And the next morning they called me.

TE: Interesting.

CW: So, the personnel manager, bless his heart, I asked and he said, "Well, I'll tell you someday." After retirement. And before he retired, he called me in and he said, "We listened to the wrong people."

TE: Oh.

JR: They learned.

CW: Now look how much that could damage people all because you didn't agree with Democrat or Republican.

TE: Right. That's true.

CW: I don't know if it's changed a lot. Well, they don't have that...

JR: I'd like to ask just a little bit about your time at CP Clare, your work life and your husband's work life because we kind of got off onto another track.

CW: Yeah. He worked at Sayles Bleachery.

JR: Oh he did?

CW: For 38 years.

JR: Wow. And you worked at CP Clare?

CW: Yeah.

JR: 35 years you said?

CW: 35.

JR: Wow.

CW: It was quality control supervisor for them. And it was a great place to work.

JR: You enjoyed it.

CW: In fact, that really helped Fairview. The women that got to work there would've had no income other than that. See all of Fairview had a lot of ladies that could do things and that really gave them some income. And it was close.

JR: What you said is what we've noticed from doing interviews is there were some really smart women who would've been stuck at home with nothing to do if it hadn't been for CP Clare. And they were really smart.

CW: And I know we used to make a joke like, "Don't talk about anybody because everybody's kinfolks is working there."

JR: That's right.

TE: I've heard that mentioned previously. Back in your young married days and raising your children, what stores do you remember that were in Fairview?

CW: Well, we had Guy Merrell's over in Fairview. He was there for years. He was there back when I was graduating because I went over there and bought a pair of shoes, white shoes to wear for my graduation. So, I remember.

TE: Do you remember how much--?

CW: My mother made my dress.

TE: Do you remember how much you paid for those shoes?

CW: No, I have no idea. Couldn't have been over $2. Because you just didn't have any money. And at that time, of course, Daddy was working more steady, but I just remember that it wasn't much, I know.

TE: What about places to go to eat when you did have money, if you ate in Fairview?

CW: What? I'm sorry.

TE: If you had the money to eat at a restaurant or something in Fairview, what would that have been?

CW: We didn't have any restaurants in Fairview. Where Angelo's is there was something else that I remember. I don't remember any restaurants. We'd have to go into Biltmore or further. And then I guess Ingle's built down at the foot of the mountain there years ago. Ledbetters had a store right there across from where Jack's family's house, just the other side of the Hot Dog King. Those stores were in there now. Mr. Williams too, he had a store there before then. And people would trade chickens for food. He had a hole over in the corner of the store and he had a pen under there. So, when they brought the chickens, he'd just drop them in the pen.

JR: Then he'd sell the chicken to somebody else.

CW: Yeah, he'd sell the chicken to somebody else.

TE: That's interesting.

JR: But they carried pretty much everything in these stores, didn't they?

CW: Yeah.

JR: I mean you could buy farm equipment or a dress or whatever you needed.

CW: Stick candy, or stuff like that.

JR: And they bought fabric to sew.

CW: I think so, yeah. Now by the time I was up old enough, we would go into Asheville, to Kresses and those places and buy. Now I know I bought material 25 cents a yard to make stuff out. I loved to sew and Home Ec, we had to make stuff. And two yards and a half I could get a dress for 50 something cents.

TE: During this same time period we're talking about right now, did you feel safe in Fairview?

CW: Never locked the door, didn't even think. You just didn't think about those things.

TE: Was there much crime that you can remember?

CW: Not that I can remember. I just don't remember any. One time we had some escaped convicts or something come through and go up Gap Creek and then they killed the man up at the head of the creek. We didn't know it. A dead end up there. They came right back by grandpa's, we're sitting on the porch, and just waved and everybody waved at them because they didn't know that what they'd done.

TE: Oh my goodness.

CW: Well it wasn't...

TE: Well you had no way of knowing.

CW: No phones or nothing until somebody got word out. We was pretty excited about that.

TE: How did you get news in Fairview then?

CW: How what?

TE: Get news. How did you learn about news in Fairview?

CW: Well, I guess word of mouth. I don't know. We had a paper, I think. I know we took the paper, The Citizen-Times, that part. But just word of mouth, I guess.

TE: How do you feel about the Fairview general area now about safety?

CW: Well, where I live, I feel pretty safe now.

TE: You lock your doors?

CW: I do lock my doors. I have an ADT security system, I have a mobile help system if I fall. But no, I wouldn't feel like just opening up, leaving cars. We can't leave cars sitting out unlocked because we've had break-ins not right where I am, but right around close. And some areas in Fairview have gotten a little more crime prone. And I don't mean to discriminate, but it's people that's moved in, it's really not the old Fairview people. Sort of transients. And it makes it bad for the older people that's always lived there and it has such a nice, safe.

TE: Same time period again, were there doctors in Fairview?

CW: Well, we had the old Dr. McCracken. He delivered everybody, I think that was out there then. I know at one time we lived across the street from him there right below the school. He lived right below where the school is now on the left. And mother got sick and dad's at work and I had to race all the way out to Rock store to call the doctor. Well no, we got Dr. McCracken but he said she was bad enough I had to go call my dad to come and get her to the hospital.

TE: Did he make house calls?

CW: Oh yes.

TE: Do you know what he charged?

CW: No, I don't. Now he delivered, I know my husband when we was talking about him, he delivered all those babies, I'm sure. Grandmas, I'm sure, she had nine.

JR: Oh, my goodness. Nine.

CW: And that's the only doc... Dr. Lynch lived up in the bottom up towards the Hickory Nut Gap. Now I don't recall him making house calls. He could have, but Dr. Lynch is one of them. I know my husband said he had a boil on his arm one time. You know how they'll be sore?

TE: Yes.

CW: And Dr. McCracken's wife, she helped him. And he said, "Hun, come in here." So, he put Jack's arm on the table and told her to sit on the end of the arm to hold it. Jack always laughed and said, "Ms. McCracken got her big behind right on my arm." And he said, "I couldn't have moved if I wanted to till they lanced that boil." Can you believe that now? Now that was true.

TE: That was different that is for sure.

CW: But that was life.

TE: Same time period, but do you recall any major incidences like major floods or fires or catastrophe kind of situations?

CW: We had blizzards where schools got shut down and one time and kids couldn't get home. I remember that because we lived across the creek. And see, the thing is we didn't have the communication we have now. Of course, this is back when I was about fifth grade. But the buses loaded up as soon as they could, but it was so heavy they didn't get home. They had to take some of the children all the way to the courthouse to keep them overnight. And their mothers didn't know where they are.

TE: Oh, how frantic.

JR: Oh wow.

CW: We got out the bus and started home up our drive and mother said, "No, go down by the spring." Well, she didn't realize it when we got to the spring, it was a cutout where the spring was. And I stepped in snow about waist high.

TE: Oh no.

CW: It drifted. And then once more when I was in high school, the buses couldn't get all the way home. And I know one of the boys that was in our class spent the night at our house and they always teased me about him staying at our house. But he lived down on Gap Creek down there and he couldn't get home. And there's no way, that time I was talking about getting in the snow drift, this man and woman that lived up on Webb Creek had to stay on the highway there for about two days.

TE: Oh, my gosh.

CW: And one of the men got the horse and sled out of his house and went to hunt his kids up.

TE: Oh, my word.

CW: That's just how it is. You can't believe it because you can't.

TE: Can't imagine that now.

CW: No, communication now, everybody knows where everybody is.

TE: That's true. That is true. Ms. Wright, are there any topics or anything that you wanted to share with us today that we have not asked about? If so, please share any and all.

CW: Well, I don't know. You know how all the old things went. Like grandma, I remember this come to me, but they didn't have refrigeration electric, but they had a spring and a spring house. And grandpa had that thing concreted, fixed so perfect. One little section off, and here's where the milk and butter set. And it would be just as cold as ice with that creamy butter. And when I'd be down there visiting, grandma would cook on a wood stove. And she had, when she made cornbread, it had that big, thick, good crust. But grandpa couldn't chew it, evidently he didn't have good dentures. So he'd clean out all the crumbs and leave the crust. And I always sat to his right and I always took his crust and put the butter on it.

JR: Oh, that's the best part.

TE: Absolutely.

CW: And when we'd go down there at Christmas, Grandma didn't buy gifts of course, ‘cause they didn't have the money. But she made cakes and she had a pie safe in the dining room, room they didn't use much. And she'd have pound cake, walnut cake, fresh chopped up on walnuts, and a coconut. Now she'd make a chocolate cake that had yellow

layers with thick chocolate filling. So, before we left, she'd give her every, if it was four of us, she'd slice us off one of each thing. And I couldn't hardly wait till mama got home.

TE: I know they must have been good.

CW: And then they had a cellar, a granary where they kept their apples. And you could go down there in the wintertime and get apples, crack walnuts outside. We'd crack them.

TE: The black walnuts?

CW: Yeah.

TE: Yeah. Those are delicious.

CW: Those are things we don't have today. Had a big old barn where we played in the hay. The stalls were down here and you had upstairs for the barn and where he'd throw the hay down and we'd go hunt eggs in the hay stack. You'd hear an old hen cackle and you'd go, "Crud."

TE: Chase her down.

CW: I loved that. Back then that was a way of life, but now when I think back, how much fun I did have. Slept on a straw tick. Grandma didn't have mattresses, but when you got in that tick, that thing rolled up around you. You couldn't be cold.

TE: You mentioned the fresh butter. Did you ever churn any and help to make butter?

CW: Oh, I did. We had a cow. Jack, he loved animals. We ended up down on Emmas Grove Road with Black Angus, he raised them. But we milked and churned. I sold butter.

And the granddaughters one time, we was eating, I said, "Now you know where this milk comes from." One speaks up, "I do." Said, "Grandpa leaks a cow."

TE: Leaks. That's funny.

CW: She'd been with him to the barn, said, "Grandpa leaks a cow." But yeah, we raised chickens and killed them, put them in the freezer. We done all that stuff.

JR: Your family ate well.

CW: My husband loved, he worked the bleachery, but he liked all this other, and we built three houses. One, and then got one a little bigger, and then he got land and we stayed there, of course. But we raised pigs one year. This is funny. We had two big sow pigs, fine pigs. And pigs were selling good so we had thought we'd go... Of course the bucket drops out of the price when we get pigs. And they had about 13. One had 13 or something, one had 12. One would not accept her pigs. I think it scared her. It was her first litter. And so way in the morning, about two o'clock in the morning, Jack had been to check on him. And he come in and said, "That red one's, I'm afraid it's going to kill her. The baby, she's not..." Said, "If you'll come down here."

And I said, "Okay. So here we go. And he had it built real nice. And I stood up on a board, it raining, had a cover. Leaning over, rubbing that old sow, keeping her calm so he could set one pig at a time in to nurse. When I think about that, I get so tickled. But we were so proud of those pigs because we wanted to sell them.

JR: And did she accept them after that?

CW: After she got used to them, she did all right.

JR: So, you just had to keep her calm.

CW: Oh yeah.

JR: That was good psychology.

CW: Yeah. He said if just keep her calm till we can get her used to them.

TE: It was good.

JR: He knew what he was doing.

CW: But, of course, it had to be a rainy night.

TE: Of course.

CW: Hair hanging down in your eyes.

TE: Those things usually happen on rainy, cold nights, don't they?

CW: Oh. But, you know, that was a good life.

TE: Well, there are people today who are working very hard to live what they call off grid now and where they farm and do all those things. And that's very nice, I think to do, but they think they invented it themselves.

CW: Oh, I know. And we started. We were young and he didn't live on a farm. I didn't either so we basically learned. But he loved to do his cattle and the boys, he'd let them drive the tractors and do things. So that pleased them.

TE: And they had to learn.

CW: Yeah. Everybody has to learn.

TE: Everybody had jobs to do.

CW: Oh yeah.

JR: Sounds like a very active and very healthy life. Not so much stress.

CW: I think we grew up with a lot of responsibility. Now, at one time, we lived over on Swannanoa River Road just off from the golf course. Dad had a little restaurant at the time. And I walked from there to Oakley School.

JR: That's a piece.

CW: There wasn't any mall in there, it was all woods.

JR: That's a piece.

CW: And there was a railroad track running through it. I didn't have to do it, but a couple or three months because school was out. But when I left out in the morning, my little sister and I, mama didn't know if we got there because she didn't have any way of knowing until we got back home that afternoon. And once we ran upon some hobos, they rode the railroad track a lot, but they didn't bother you then. I reckon they wasn't afraid. We went, anyway. I think about that now. You won't let a kid walk down the street hardly.

TE: That's true. That's true. Times are different.

CW: But I think that it didn't hurt us. It didn't hurt us to do that.

TE: Judith, do you have any questions?

JR: I think it's been fascinating hearing you tell these stories and you have such a fine memory.

CW: And one time mother's birthday, I always felt sorry for mother because daddy domineered her. Being older and she didn't take her part like I think she ought to. But anyway, they didn't run home to mama like they do now. You lived with somebody, you lived with them. It was her birthday and her birthday's in June so the wild strawberries were growing good. And so now I was 12 years old. And so, we were going to fix mother supper that night. And we had old wood stove, how temperature, no control. Well, I don't know how, we didn't have cake mix. I made that cake, we picked wild strawberries and the white frosting and put the strawberries on it. I don't know what we had for supper, but we made her stay in the other part of the house. So, we called her in, we had the strawberry cake and everything, and she cried. And till this day, I don't know if she cried because she was so hurt or if she saw the mess over there.

JR: No, she was probably that touched that you had done that for her.

CW: But I thought when she saw the mess too, we made, she probably cried.

JR: Well, she wasn't used to people making a fuss over her, was she?

CW: No, but I remember that. That cake. I don't know how we got it out of the pan without it sticking or anything, but it was two layers. I reckon. I don't even remember about that.

TE: Well, I'm sure she appreciated it, like Judith said.

CW: But kids, we grew up learning to do practical things. We had to. You have to think for yourself.

JR: Sure.

TE: Yeah.

CW: Things didn't always come ready made. You had to do them.

TE: Very different now.

CW: And I guess maybe I got some of my, what do you want to call it? Determination? Spunk?

TE: Spunk.

CW: To do because I knew it had to be done.

JR: Exactly.

TE: You learned to rely on yourself for a lot of things. Well, thank you so much, Mrs. Wright. This has been a joy and a pleasure for you to share all this information.

CW: Sometimes we go back too much.

TE: No. And as Judith mentioned a while ago, your memory is just on target.

CW: I can remember back when I was four years old.

TE: Wow.

CW: Because we lived in an apartment and this little boy wanted to break my doll or something. I remember enough to know that I had to watch out to not let him have it. And when I reached back in time, I know I was about four.

TE: You saved it.

JR: Well, I know you have lots and lots of stories.

TE: Thank you so much again. We really appreciate your time.

CW: You're welcome. I'm just glad to do it.

END OF INTERVIEW.